

December 23, 1957

Professor Bernard D. Davis
Department of Bacteriology and Immunology
Harvard Medical School
25 Shattuck Street
Boston 15, Massachusetts

Dear Bernie:

I can understand that Boris's manuscript would give you some difficulties. The problem has been to pry it out of him at all, as it has been some time as you know since he did this work. However while my reactions to his manuscript were of the same quality as yours they perhaps did not have the same vigor, possibly as I am somewhat less intimately familiar with and perhaps therefore less entranced by the analysis that Monod has been making. In any case I think the best procedure is to follow the regular channel of communication through the journal. In forwarding your comment however I would ask you to keep in mind what you would like the total effect to be. It would be all too easy for the criticism to be presented in such a fashion that the paper would not come out at all. If you wished you could probably communicate directly with Boris without harm. That would be entirely up to you.

Despite the somewhat frustrating difficulties represented by this manuscript, a large part of which stems from an unusual measure of scientific integrity and personal self-criticism on Boris's part, I can recommend to you very highly as a laboratory colleague. He is a first class experimentalist, and if the problems he works on seem too difficult perhaps they are so for any one of any talents. Alternatively perhaps he is not sufficiently ready to ignore embarrassing or inconsistent pieces of data in formulating a grand scheme. This I think will come out with even greater force in your personal contacts with him than in the manuscript here presented itself. In sum I would urge you for the sake of a creative result to make a firm but as sympathetic a criticism as possible along the lines of your review. It would make very little difference if you communicated this through the journal or directly with Boris, except in so far as doing the latter might bear on the easy casualness of your relationships with him later in your own laboratory.

With all the best,

Yours sincerely,

JL/ew